



Supplemental Appropriation #23-9 to the County Govt's FY23 Operating Budget, Dept of HHS, Assistance to Access Abortion, Reproductive Health, and Related Services, \$1,000,000

TESTIMONY BY KATHY KELLY, DEMOCRATS FOR LIFE OF MARYLAND

Democrats for Life of Maryland, which is a chapter of Democrats for Life of America (DFLA), opposes Supplemental Appropriation #23-9 to the County Government's FY23 Operating Budget, Department of Health and Human Services, Assistance to Access Abortion, Reproductive Health, and Related Services, \$1,000,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Undesignated Reserves). This appropriation is designed to make up for the \$3.5 million described as presently withheld by Governor Hogan under his discretionary budgetary authority, for an abortion clinical training program called for by HB0937, the Abortion Care Access Act, passed by the Maryland General Assembly last session, which went into law on July 1st. Democrats for Life of Maryland has closely followed some gruesome abortion injuries which occurred during late-term abortions on women at an abortion facility in Bethesda, Maryland during 2020. We do not need to make more investments in unrestricted abortion in our county while offering no funds to crisis pregnancy services. While the county press release announcing this proposed \$1 million appropriation says it will offer *"wraparound services to those who are accessing abortion services to providers, as well as to those who choose to have children"*, it does not state that it will provide any funds to women who are still in crisis, who have not yet decided to give birth. Where are the funds for crisis pregnancy services such as Centro Tepeyac Women's Center, the Gabriel Project Cluster of Montgomery County, or the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center? The organizations which provide information and aid to women while they are still in crisis seem to be skipped in this appropriation.

It's time to clarify clearly to your constituents if you will put money into crisis pregnancy aid. In a candidate survey of Council candidates conducted by the Justice & Advocacy Council this year, Council Members Friedson, Glass, Jawando, and Katz said Yes to the prospect of providing life-affirming help for women who choose to maintain their education and/or career and have children, while members Alborno and Hucker didn't answer the question.

County citizens too seem to be skipped in this appropriation. On May 12, 2022, I emailed my District 1 Council member, Andrew Friedson, on this subject, raising the same concerns as I am doing here, and got an auto-response saying his office would be in touch with me as soon as they are able; but no reply ever came. Why is this appropriation being proposed before telling constituents the names of the organizations you deem worthy of the funds, and the ones you may filter out? So I ask again, where is the guarantee of funding for pregnant women in **crisis**? If you are really pro-choice, wouldn't you agree that women could benefit from hearing about available alternatives to abortion and resources to sustain them during crisis pregnancies and after giving birth? Without supporting such services, the county is pushing women into abortion, which is pro-abortion, not pro-choice. Where is the balance in that action? Have you polled the county taxpayers as to whether they want \$1 million to go to abortion with no portion going to **crisis** pregnancy services? No one asked me if I want this. Democrats for Life of Maryland opposes this one-sided push towards the medical violence of abortion.

Kathy Kelly, Director, Democrats for Life of Maryland, <https://www.facebook.com/MDDEMS4Life>